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INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-16

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INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SS-15 SR-02 RM-07 NSCE-00 H-01
CIAE-00 IHR-10 NSAE-00 OOE-00 PA-01 CAE-00
SSO-00 INRE-00 /053 W

O R 231926Z SEP 86
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4956
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

CONFIDENTIAL KINGSTON 7098

E.O. 12065: GDS 9/22/86 (LAWRENCE, LOREN) OR-M
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECT: POLL SHOWS JLP AHEAD BY 7.6 PERCENT

1. C-ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY

THE SURVEY, CONDUCTED EARLY THIS MONTH, SHOWS THE JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) LEADING THE PEOPLES' NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) BY 7.6 PERCENT, USING THE RESULTS OF PAST ELECTION, STONE EXTRAPOLATES THE JLP LEAD INTO A 38-40 SEAT MAJORITY IN THE PARLIAMENT. END SUMMARY.

3. THE SEPTEMBER POLL WAS CONDUCTED IN ALL OF JAMAICA'S THIRTEEN PARISHES, WITH 1,964 VOTERS INTERVIEWED, OF THOSE EXPRESSING A PARTY PREFERENCE, 53.3 PERCENT SUPPORTED THE JLP, WHILE 46.2 PERCENT FAVORED THE PNP, 18 PERCENT OF THE NUMBER INTERVIEWED INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT VOTE OR WOULD REMAIN UNDECIDED.

4. IN STONE'S JUNE POLL, WHICH HAD 812 RESPONDENTS, THE JLP HAS 55.4 PERCENT AND THE PNP 44.1 PERCENT, WITH 21 PERCENT UNDECIDED OR STATING AN INTENTION NOT TO VOTE. ACCORDING TO STONE, THE SEPTEMBER PNP GAIN REFLECTS A SHIFT TOWARD THE PNP IN THE KINGSTON SAINT ANDREW CORPORATE AREA AND IN THE EASTERN PARISHES.

5. USING FIGURES FROM ALL ELECTIONS SINCE 1944 AND THE FACT THAT THE NUMBER OF SEATS WON BY THE PARTY RECEIVING THE MAJORITY OF VOTES IS MUCH LARGER THAN THE DIFFERENCE IN THE POPULAR VOTE, STONE PREDICTS THAT THE 7.6 PERCENT JLP LEAD WILL TRANSLATE INTO 38-40 SEATS IN THE SIXTY-MEMBER PARLIAMENT. HE NOTES THAT IN PAST ELECTIONS, THE JLP HAS ALWAYS HAD AN ADVANTAGE OVER THE PNP IN CLOSE ELECTIONS BECAUSE IT IS STRONG IN SMALLER RURAL CONSTITUENCIES, GIVING IT MORE SEATS WITH FEWER VOTES. FOR INSTANCE, IN THE EIGHT ELECTIONS SINCE 1944, THE JLP WON A COMFORTABLE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY FOUR TIMES, EVEN THOUGH IT NEVER GARNERED MORE THAN 50.7 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE. AND IN THE 1949 ELECTION, THE JLP WON 17 SEATS TO THE PNP'S 13, ALTHOUGH THE LATTER PARTY HAD 1.2 PERCENT MORE OF THE POPULAR VOTE.

4. STONE'S POLL CONTRASTS WITH THE RESULTS OF A POLL CONDUCTED BY SENIOR PNP OFFICIAL DR PAUL ROBERTSON BETWEEN LATE JULY AND EARLY AUGUST AMONG 1,681 VOTERS. THE ROBERTSON RESULTS SHOWED 50.5 PERCENT FAVORING THE PNP, WHILE 49.4 PERCENT BACKED THE JLP. ROBERTSON EXTRAPOLATED THIS SLIGHT LEAD INTO A 42-47 SEAT PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY.

5. ROBERTSON'S POLL HAS BEEN CRITICIZED BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY BY THE JLP. THE OPPOSITION CLAIMS THAT ROBERTSON'S RESULT SHOWED A 59-41 JLP LEAD AND THAT THE FIGURES WERE CHANGED BY THE PNP HIERARCHY. THE JLP PRIVATELY CLAIMS TO HAVE A PAPER SHOWING THE POLL RESULTS WITH THE CHANGED FIGURES IN ROBERTSON'S HANDWRITING, UT WE HAVE NOT SEEN THIS NOR HAS IT BEEN PUBLISHED. JLP SOURCES ALSO HAVE CRITICIZED THE METHODOLOGY USED BY ROBERTSON, CLAIMING HIS QUESTIONS WERE TACKLED ON TO A MARKETING RESEARCH SURVEY AND THUS WAS LESS SCIENTIFIC THAN STONE'S POLL.

6. STONE'S SEPTEMBER POLL IS EXPECTED TO BE PUBLISHED IN INSTALLMENTS DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF OCTOBER IT IS FINANCED BY THE GLEANER CORPORATION WHICH HAS PUBLISHED PAST STONE POLLS IN THE STAR, THE STAR, AND THE GLEANER HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLISHED HOWEVER, SINCE SEPTEMBER 19 BECAUSE OF A STRIKE BY PRODUCTION WORKERS.

7. COMMENT. STONE IS JAMAICA'S MOST REPECTED POLLSTER, IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF HIS THOROUGH METHODS AND HIS ACCURACY IN PREDICTING THE RESULTS OF THE LAST TWO ELECTIONS. HIS SEPTEMBER POLL WILL BE RECEIVED WITH MORE CREDIBILITY THAN ROBERTSON'S AT THE SAME TIME, THE DROP IN THE JLP LEAD FROM 11.3 PERCENT IN JUNE TO 7.6 PERCENT IN SEPTEMBER WILL GIVE THE PNP A PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST AND AN INCENTIVE TO CAMPAIGN HARDER TO REDUCE THE JLP LEAD FURTHER. AS FOR THE JLP REACTION, IT WILL BE SPURRED TO INCREASE ITS EFFORTS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ITS APPARENT COMFORTABLE LEAD.

LAWRENCE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY RG DATE 25 JUN 1982
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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